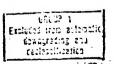
24 February 1907

MEHORANDUM

104-10104-10094

Estimate of Damage Which Could Accrue to CIA SUBJECT: Miami Through Prosecution of the Rolando Masferrer Haitian Invasion Croup

- 1. The debision by the Justice Department to seek a Grand Jury indictment against Rolando Masferrer and certain ' of his associates is a potentially emplosive matter which could result in extensive damage to CIA activities in Miami. Recent adverse publicity on the untional scene and in the Miami area have added substantially to the already sizeable embarrassment potential. Some of the main sectors of danger to CIA equities are described below.
- Basic national publicity regarding student and . foundation topics have already attracted attention of the local press to the CIA in general. Usually any reference to CIA covert activities leads the press to check files for references to any such activities locally. However, before this action could be taken, the story regarding the Pan American Foundation and the University of Miana broke, and the press immediately concentrated on this topic. The CIA Chief of Station learned through personal press contacts that this was partly a matter of luck and partly because of the friendly and cooperative attitude of those press contacts. Although several editorials highly critical of CIA have been published and the replay of wire service stories has been given much space, as yot there has been no local follow-up simed at patting CIA or the CIA Station on the spot. However, the situation remains delicate, since, even with much good will, local newsmen cannot afford to let themselves be scooped by outsiders concerning esteries in their own back yard.
 - Any new story, such as the 22 February story in Vorld Commal Tribune on suspected CIA connection with recruitment of Cucan pilots for the Congo, the possible regults of inquiry made on 21 February by three students connected with the University of Miami newspaper The Turricane, or further revelations concerning the Fan Imerican Foundation, could easily trigger publicity with an inevitable focus on the South Campus of the University of Miami and on the Miami Station cover firm.



As has been the case for the past six your) and of the have extended their fullest cooperation concerning the Mami Station and overall CIA interests and it is anticipated they will continue to do so. However, we believe there is a practical limit to the amount of pressure they and from certain public could stand from quarters if there is a flood of publicity regarding OIA nativities allegedly contained in or controlled from the ruch a situation arices, Eor, the (would feel impelled it is conceivable that (to take some action aimedent disaspeciating the from any contactawith the Dis estensibly the tenant of Sincy the although on Federal property, the resulting action night involve a request for the termination of the tenancy agreement.

Even if the above circumstances did not emist, we vould remain concerned regarding the possible effects of the presecution of the Masferrer group. Although no Station agents or persons with whom the Miami Station has contractual arrangements are among the persons arrested or those who will be prosecuted, it will be very easy for the defense to Grag CIA Micmi Ento the case. The defense has only to obtain testimony (true or perjured) from one of the defendants, or to summon as defense witness one or more disaffected former agents of the CIA Station, in order to begin a chain reaction surfacing much detail and rumor concerning CIA operations against the Cuban varget. Given the sizeable reduction of infiltration and Covert Action agents during the past year, a general feeling of frustration and lack of support for Cuban freedom attributed to passive U.S. policy and reduction in Old support in all sectors, the long standing unimosity of cortain emile circles against U.S. Government, novably CIA, and the evaluation that CIA now is the most sulmerable of Federal Agencies confronting them, exiled will be tempted to see an attack against CIA as accomplishing several purposes, that is, gaining acquittal, blackening CIA, and exerting pressure on the U.S. Government for a policy change.

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